TDARS News Letter

G3ZME G6ZME

TELFORD AND DISTRICT AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

www.TDARS.org.uk FOUNDED 1969 www.TelfordHamfest.co.uk

Issue 300 May/June 2021

www.TDARS.org.uk

Programme

www.telfordhamfest.co.uk

IMPORTANT NOTICE: ***SOME MEETINGS RE-STARTING AT LWVH—SEE LIST BELOW***

Dates and Events that follow are subject to change at short notice.

May 19 Little Wenlock Village Field Meeting (behind the Huntsman) in person—Bring /P radio+antenna. Also LEO satellite operation demo and more

May 26 RC Cars & Planes: Location field near Longdon-on-Tern. Contact John M0JZH for further details or see groups.io message from John dated 16th May

June 2 Committee & HamFest meeting.(Webex) + 2 metre chat night 144.60 MHz FM +/-

June 9 "AM-Amplitude Modulation- in the 21st Century"by Simon MW0NWM (Webex)

June 16 "Boats, Boots & Megacycles" presented by Kev Richards G0PEK and Lauren 2E0HLR (Webex). The dynamic cycling duo !

June 23 "Magnetic Loop Antennas" presentation by Andrew G0RVM (Webex)

June 30 TDARS Meeting on Little Wenlock Village Field. If raining, LW Village Hall itself. Face-masks, please.

July 7 Committee & HamFest Meeting ***LWVH*** + 2 metre chat night 144.600 MHz FM +/-

July 14 B-B-Q and Trophy Presentations LW Village Field (LWVH if bad weather) Bring your own refreshments or drink)

July 21 Six Metre Antennas—bring your favourite along to demo on LW Village Field (Weather permitting)

July 28 Post-Lockdown 2 metre local DF (Fox) Hunt ! 7:30 pm start (144.600 MHz FM)

NOTE:- Most meetings currently take place on-line. Unless otherwise stated these meetings are open to Members Only. If you don't receive an e-mail invitation, and you have paid up, then please contact Graham G7LMF (e-mail address below)

For Equipment Loans & Returns contact Don M0TBQ.

For "Beyond Exams" scheme (Club or Individual) —enquiries to Graham G7LMF

For Morse Training and Morse Proficiency Tests Martyn G3UKV or Eric M0KZB.

Radio Amateur Exams- Latest: Contact Graham G7LMF training@tdars.org.uk

Editorial


X 100

Trumpet Fanfare Please : : : : TDARS Newsletter issue number 300

[*Well, someone had to blow their own instrument*.]

The return to something like normality has thankfully continued since my last Editorial, but you will notice on the front page programme that most of the Wednesday TDARS meetings after the end of June continue to be outside of the LW Village Hall. This is for at least two reasons. Firstly, we cannot yet be sure that all government (and local) restrictions will be removed by then, and secondly, some members may not feel secure enough by that time to meet in a fairly confined enclosed space. Anyway, the summer months are a good time to be out and about, and the Village Field, with its open shelter at the rear if it rains, is a very pleasant environment, with the Huntman's pub facilities and car park right next door !

Several members have enquired whether the highly successful on-line presentations can continue once normal LW meetings resume. The new 2021/22 Committee very much hope so. But there's much more to it than just placing a camera and mic at the front of the meeting room, linked to the Centre's internet router, plus a projector and screen. A few years ago we did something similar, with an Internet linked laptop driving the screen projector in LWVH. The talk went well, but the follow-up Q & A after the remote speaker's presentation was not a success. Ideally, the requirement is for both relaying a remote speaker's talk/demo (webinar) into the Hall and relaying locally generated events outwards from the Village Hall itself. This would be a boon for those unable to attend LWVH in person, but hopefully would not reduce physical attendance by the majority.
So far, it's work in progress . . . . Watch this space.

MIV

@g3zme

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Telfordhams

From Simon MW0NWM (ex TDARS Member—Ed)

"Do you like using various voice modes? Perhaps you like constructing your own equipment? Did you use AM in your early years as a radio amateur? Then perhaps out new society is for you!
It gives us great pleasure to introduce the newly formed ***Amplitude Modulation Amateur Radio Society***.
The aim of the society is to promote the use of the original voice mode using vintage, modern and homebrew equipment on all the amateur bands available to us. We shall also strive to promote the AM mode to the National and International societies to ensure the mode is supported for future generations.
The initial work to set up this new society has been undertaken by Kevin GW0PUH, Alan G6RBM, Mark MW0RZS, John G3YPZ and Simon MW0NWM. We are planning to organise a quarterly club newsletter, two annual weekend AM activity events, AM contest and construction events. We plan to join the RSGB and other national societies based on where our members live.
We shall be holding our first AGM on Wednesday 21st July (2021) at 19:00 UTC (20:00 BST) on Zoom.
So we have lots of plans, but to make a success of this we need members to help support this work and make the club successful! The cost of membership is £5 per year, which will be renewed prior to every AGM. Members are welcome from all over the world and if you prefer to pay via Paypal the membership cost is £5.50. If you are interested in joining, please email the society treasurer Simon Taylor MW0NWM at the following email address and he will give you full details:- secretary@...
Hope to have you join us and enjoy the original voice mode! "

TELFORD & DISTRICT AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY : 2021-22

CHAIRMAN: Simon Bird G0UFE (telfordslivewire@hotmail.co.uk Tel: 01952 401018)

VICE-CHAIRMAN: Martyn Vincent G3UKV (ukv@ukv.me.uk Tel:01952 255416)
SECRETARY: John Humphreys M0JZH (m0jzh@yahoo.co.uk Tel:07824 737716)
TREASURER: Paul Athersmith M0PLA (paul.athersmith@gmail.com Tel:07966 969230)
CURATOR : Don Nicholls M0TBQ (donsnicholls@outlook.com Tel: 01952 411680)
TRAINING and 'Beyond Exams': Graham Cowan G7LMF (training@tdars.org.uk)
NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Martyn Vincent G3UKV (01952 255416 or 07421 001166)
PUBLICITY/WEBMASTER : Dave G0CER (davekh@gmail.com)
Committee: Graham G7LMF; Ian M0IRP; Village Hall Committee Liaison officer Martin 2E0TRO.
QSL Manager Paul M0PNN; Assist Curator: Chris 2E0EOH; Trophies/Certs: Martyn G3UKV.

Qtc: News & Information

TDARS MEETINGS EVERY WEDNESDAY EVENING HELD NORMALLY AT LITTLE WENLOCK VILLAGE HALL

SEE PROGRAMME PAGE 1 FOR LATEST MEETING VENUES & ARRANGEMENTS

Please note: A current membership card may be required to borrow TDARS equipment. Please return borrowed equipment promptly .

The use of Webex online for TDARS has continued throughout the period and will continue for the present. We hope to return to some meetings at LWVH from the end of June, depending on government and local announcements. Club nets continue (Sundays, 9pm 144.6MHz FM +/-. Also 3.657MHz SSB, Mondays & Fridays from 8:45 am)

Future speakers provisionally booked include Simon *MW0NWM on "Amplitude Modulation (AM) in the 21st Century" , Kev Richards and Lauren (G0PEK / 2E0HLR) "Boats, Boots and Megacycles" - as well as a full programme of outside events for the summer. See page 1.*

At the online AGM, various Trophies were announced: The Jack Hassall Trophy was awarded to Graham G7LMFfor his sterling work in organising at very short notice the online meetings and presentations from early in 2020 to the present.





This 'Operating in the spirit of A.R.' Trophy (the Syd Poole G3IMP) was awarded to Dave G0CER, for his efforts on behalf of our Society in promoting the contest side of our hobby.

The Main Construction Trophy was won by David M0YDH for his magnificent DATV Portsdown' system built up over many months.



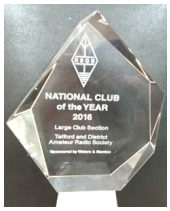


The 'Under a Fiver' construction award went to Paul M0PLA for his exploits in 3D printing, notably the transceiver stand he designed and made.

The remaining trophies for various reasons were not awarded this year at the AGM, but it is intended that the above engraved trophies will be formally presented by our Chairman to the winners on Wednesday July 14th, in the LW Village Field location, or if weather unsuitable, in LW Village Hall.

TDARS Membership subscriptions for 2021-22 became due at the AGM. About 35 members have joined or renewed to date. Due to covid-19 restrictions on club activities, the annual sub for this year has been reduced to ***£25 (£19 for non-earners***). Contact Paul our Treasurer for payments (see bottom of Pg 2) . Paul M0PLA is in the process of setting up automatic Direct Debit bank arrangements for those who prefer to pay this way each year, but all other payment methods continue to be very acceptable !

The ***TDARS website relating to the Full A.R. Licence training*** has been updated (G3JKX, G0CER) Mike writes: "If you are about to prepare for the Full licence examination you are strongly recommended to study with the Bath Based Advanced Distance Learning course. (BBADL) https://badarc.webs.com/bath-training

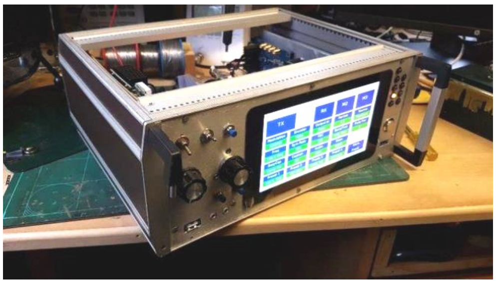


There are two each year, organised by Steve G0FUW@tiscali.co.uk. Students receive on-line weekly study materials and a quiz to answer on that week's work. Sometimes there are quizzes covering several week's work. There are also mock exams.
Students are allocated a tutor who will monitor progress and provide feedback on incorrect answers to quiz questions and get support by e mail, with phone, skype or personal face-face tutorials by arrangement.
The pass rate for BBADL students is very high and well exceeds the national pass rate. Highly recommended."

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TDARS 2021 Main Construction Competition entries. (17 March 2021)

The excellent winner of this year's TDARS Construction competition is the latest version of the "Portsdown" Digital ATV transceiver unit, built over many months by David M0YDH.



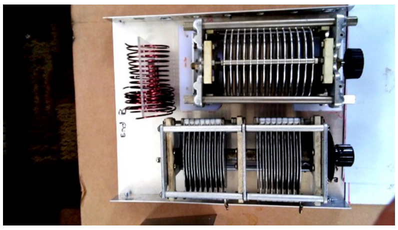




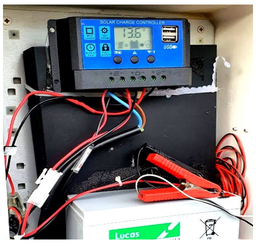
David also won the runner's up position with this Test Equipment Unit used extensively to align his range of project modules.

Following the use of on-line voting for each of the entries for the Construction Competition, there were four projects tying for third place. [**Apologies in advance** if I've mixed up images with entries—but the attached text is correct, I believe ! - Editor]

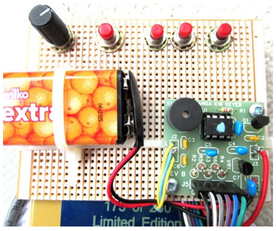
Here they are :-



ATU by Robert GW6GBY



Solar powered doublet Tuner & combination unit by Paul M0PNN



K1EL keyer PCB attached to key by Martyn G3UKV



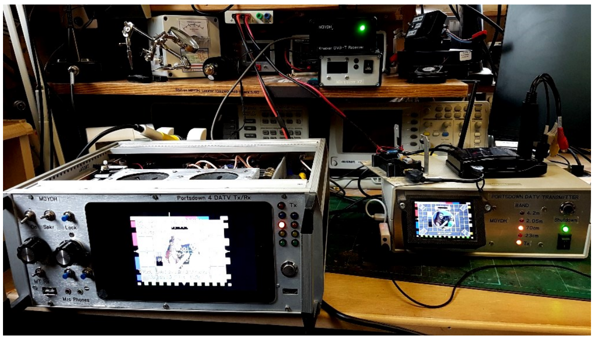
ATU kit by John M0JZH (hope I've got the right image here—Ed)

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Following on from the above—here's an article by David M0YDH that links nicely with his Mark 4 <u>"Portsdown" DATV project</u> shown above—Editor

It's not every day that one gets to try a very new mode. Low symbol rate terrestrial digital TV is completely new for 2021 due to the geniuses at BATC writing new software and creating a receiver named after a Sussex water dragon. I built the Knucker no trouble using parts from Digi-key (to ensure they're genuine) and fitted it in a black Hammond box pictured.
I made a new SD card for Portsdown Buster software and upgraded my older transmitter to Portsdown 2020 standard. Using the Lime mini SDR in the 2020 I've been able to transmit 70cm DVB-T at 333KS to the Knucker and the Portsdown 4. It just works straightaway!
Why DVB-T? I think terrestrial TV broadcasts use it because it's very tolerant of multi-path and phase shifted signals bouncing off terrain and buildings to still produce valid signals. So on 29, 50 and 71 MHz it means DX tv by sporadic E or tropospheric ducting is thought possible. All amateur digital TV in the UK has been with the satellite protocols of DVB-S and DVB-S2 to date and on 4m upwards this continues.







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TDARS Members Heather M0HMO and Dave G0CER RTTY ("Ritty") Reports

Report from Dave G0CER (23 April): BARTG Contest 23 March 2021. Heather was **UK top** for the 6 hour section:

Pos--- Callsign---—---QSOs----Continents-----Score
9 ----M8K (M0HMO)-123----------6----------65,682
27-—-G0C (G0CER)—-105----------4------—-22,680

Full Results:
https://bartg.rsgbcc.org/cgi-bin/bartg/hfresults.pl?Contest=BARTG%20HF%20Contest&year=2021



Heather responded (23 April) with "But the really good news is that **G3Z** was the top scoring UK station in the MM section, so another 2 points towards the contest callsign renewal. G3Z came 4th - certificate attached!"

The Joys of a RTTY newbie—by Heather M0HMO

This is contest time of year and RTTY contesting has been well supported in the club. Dave G0CER and I have been entering quite a few national and international contests with some good results:

BARTG HF RTTY 20/21st March : G0CER and M0HMO entered the MM section as G3Z. We were the highest placed UK multi-op station and so earned the club 2 points towards getting the contest callsign renewed and another PDF certificate. I also entered in the 6 hour section as M8K and came 9th (world) and top UK&CD (Channel Dependencies) station. Dave came 27th (world) and 4th UK&CD.

EA RTTY 3/4th April: Not a bad showing for me, 17th (world) and 2nd UK&CD. The objective here was to work Spanish provinces and I managed to work 37 of the 52 provinces plus the "HQ" special event province! I mainly used this contest to collect countries and provinces ... hoping to gain the EURD 50 trophy (see below)!

IG-RY 10/11th April: another good fun contest. I placed 25th (world) and 4th (UK&CD).

WAB Data Modes 11th April: This was my first outright win in a contest. Quite a long way ahead of the pack in fact. Onwards and upwards.

Holyland 16/17th April: Working Israel at the same time as Netherlands was a bit confusing - I kept 2 sets of macros ready and used the appropriate one. That said I only worked 3 stations on the Holyland contest and 200+ on the PACC ... Netherlands is a lot closer to us than Israel ! They still have to publish the results.

PACCDigi 17th April, SPDX 24/25th April, and Helvetia 24/25th April have not yet announced results. Still quite average conditions but some good DX if you were around for it.

BARTG Sprint 75 25th April: This is a fun event as it is fast (75 baud) and the exchange is just the RST. I worked people on the wrong baud rate, and people who had got the USB/LSB settings wrong on their radio but it quickly settled down to a steady stream of QSOs. Conditions were OK on 40m but died off very quickly on 20m. I think people got bored towards the end as most of the regulars had been in the SPDX and Helvetia contests earlier in the day. That said, I got a respectable 3rd (world) and 2nd (UK&CD) losing out to GW0A who is the BARTG President! Dave also put in a good showing at 21st (world) and 5th (UK&CD), both of us were in the 100W class.

ARI 1/2nd May I didn't enter (Paul and I were with Martyn doing microwave 10GHz contesting instead).

Volta RTTY 8/9th May has also not yet released results. This was a great contest as it encourages people to work on multiple bands and, for the first time I saw the RTTY segments of 10m and 15m nearly full. Up until this contest I have worked a total o1 (yes count them on one finger) stations on 10m. Now I have worked 60+.

Sadly not many more contests on RTTY for a while - the really big ones are at the end of the year - September onwards for the WAE, CQ WW etc. Hopefully the results will come in for the smaller we have entered in the last month or so. The results for the big ones are very very slow to be published ... the CQWW RTTY contest in September 2020 has still to announce it's results! RTTY breeds patience I guess!

>>>>>>> continued

Thanks for Newsletter input this time:

Peter G4URT, Graham G7LMF, Mike G3JKX, David M0YDH, Simon MW0NWM, Heather M0HMO, Paul M0PNN, Paul G8AQA, Dave G0CER, Shabaz, John M0XJA,
Next edition July / August 2021
Please keep it coming— Don't just leave it to someone else !

I have also been collecting RTTY countries while working these contests. The easiest way of doing this (that I have found) is to enter the 6 hour contest section seriously, then just casually look for new countries. The log entries over the 6 hour limit are used as a checklog, but it does mean you get a chance to work RTTY stations that are usually few and far between.

For QSLs, I use a combination of DCL (The DARC logbook), Clublog and LoTW. At the start of April I was on 47 European entities so still short of the 50 needed for the EURD trophy. However, perseverance and, perhaps, pestering of various clubs allowed me to arrange skeds with the Shetland Islands, Gibraltar and the Isle of Man and I made my total. I applied for the award and will soon be in possession of the rather nice perspex trophy - number 51.

Last weekend I also worked Indonesia on 15m so have now worked all 6 IARU defined continents on 40m, 20m and 15m RTTY. These certificates can be obtained for free from DARC if you like to collect wallpaper! Other RTTY awards include Worked Scandinavian RTTY award, BARTG quarter Century award and the Indonesian Digital Award (RTTY). All very doable given enough time and patience. There is no official DXCC for RTTY - it is part of the Digital DXCC which I think is a bit sad as FT8 has completely taken the fun out of the DXCC Digital challenge. There are, however, RTTY endorsements for the WAZ and WPX certificates, but you have to fork out a few hundred pounds to ARRL to get those so I am content to just know I have got some of them and keep track of the next one to get (I need another 34 prefixes on 20m).

Another fun aspect of our hobby that can include RTTY, is collecting SESs (Special Event Stations). Most days there are one or more SESs spotted on DXWatch on RTTY. I particularly like the fact that they often send out interesting QSL cards. There are a few World Amateur Radio Day callsigns still on air (OS21WARD for instance), along with the Greece 200 years SES (eg SX200JFL), OR40NOL (40 years of the NOL radio club) etc etc. Finally, there is also an SES celebrating 25 years of the German DX organisation (DL25GDXF) for which there is a another piece of free wallpaper for those interested and who can work enough members of the GDXF..

As with other contests, Paul and I try to do an improvement to the station each time we enter something. I started on just an 80m inverted V last year and have now added 40m and 160m elements to it to make a Fan Inverted V. Very cheap to do as long as you have a decent sized pole to attach the feed point to. We have also added a Hustler 6 band vertical and, my newest toy, a 7 element HF tribander. The tribander doesn't make much difference to receive but boy is it satisfying to go back to really quiet stations and work them in a pile-up competing with Italians! I added 6 countries to my total in the one contest I have entered with it so far. For radios I started out with just an FT817 working QRP RTTY and that, with the 80m inverted V was enough to get me hooked! Another nice thing about RTTY is that the areas of the band you need to be able to work are very small so usually a single tuning point on the antenna will suffice for the whole of the band. Means I can use my cheap MFJ tuner and not have to tune it all the time. That said, an autotuner would be nice ... .I use N1MM+ for logging, again because it is free and one of the top 3 or 4 contest grade loggers for RTTY. I now run 2 decoders simultaneity (fldigi and MMTTY) and often run with 2 VFOs controlled from the logger so that I can S&P effectively in between running.

We are starting to look at SO2R but that is a big step in complexity as you need to have suitable filters, antenna switches, amps and, of course, 2 radios. In fact, I suspect you also need split personalities for it so that one can use the left computer, keyboard, mouse, radio, headphone etc and the other personality can get on with the same on the right! It makes my head hurt just thinking about it I don't like to think about how it will feel working SO2R at the end of a 48 hour contest!

My Latest Challenge is to work Jersey ... that will "complete the set" of UK&CD (Channel Islands Dependencies) regions on RTTY. I have worked all the regions on SSB but Jersey is proving difficult on RTTY. So far my rarest station is Afghanistan (170th on the Most Wanted list). As you may have gathered, I am having a lot of fun looking up the locations of stations I work and keeping track of them. There is a WA-EU award (Worked all EU member states) from DARC that was quite fun to work towards - did you know Cyprus is a member state of the EU but isn't in Europe or that Malta is the smallest EU member state? I have worked all the member states on one band or another (one of the hidden benefits of leaving the EU - fewer states to have to work!) but Estonia and Slovak Republic are elusive and I have yet to work them on more than one band ... watch this space. **Heather**

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Connector (chess)board
Sent in by Paul G8AQA



As an aside to the previous article sent to the TDARS Newsletter, Heather provided this image;

"In case you missed it, I was awarded the Kenwood Trophy at the RSGB AGM 'For making a significant contribution to training and development in amateur radio within the United Kingdom', in this case for work as a remote invigilator."

Congratulations, Heather, from everyone at TDARS.

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You never know who might reply to a CQ . . . . . By Mike G3JKX

A radio story from the mid fifties.

I had left RAF apprenticeship training in 1954 and had to go to RAF Yatesbury in, not so sunny, in fact b-freezing Wiltshire. It was to attend airborne radar training courses. Naturally I found the radio club pretty quickly (G3HWF) and enjoyed using the AR88 Rx and the T1509 Tx. Bags of RF output! I would spend most evenings there and often operating until very late.



One night I was tuning around 80m, called CQ a couple times (CW of course) and eventually received a reply, but not from an amateur. The caller went on to tell me that he was part of a Naval team rowing the Atlantic in a lifeboat! Their Lat/long QTH followed, with a request to inform the Admiralty. How could I refuse? After a quick two way 'Roger'. I switched everything off, locked up and ran to the guardroom to return the key. As a very young Corporal, my breathless request to telephone the Admiralty was not looked upon very kindly by the ancient Orderly Sergeant on duty. Eventually having told my story for the second time, he relented and got the camp operator to put me through. (but only after I had given my number, rank and name)

Whilst I waited for a response, I idly wondered exactly who I should ask for. The naval switchboard operator came on and I said quite without thinking 'Duty Officer please'. After a short wait the Duty officer came on. I said who I was, told my story and gave him the Lat/Long info. "Bloody good show,' he said. "We haven't been able to locate them for days now due to the bad weather and no radio contact.

I thought no more about it until weeks later, when I was summoned to the Station Commander's Office and presented with a Certificate of Appreciation from the Navy, which I proudly displayed on the Radio Club shack wall. 3 days later the wooden radio club hut burnt down to the ground!
A nice memory though. **Mike G3JKX**
PS: I think the lifeboat was called Aries.

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Useful Internet sites for VHF / UHF propagation monitoring
—By Peter G4URT

Before we know it the Sporadic E season and decent tropo propagation conditions will be upon us [it's arrived—Ed] so I thought that now is a good time to tell / remind people of the websites that are available to assist in getting that rare square. None of these sites require any payment, but do ask for a voluntary contribution to keep the server keepers happy. Using these sites should give you the edge over your local competitor ...

1/ For an overall forecast of various modes then MakeMoreMilesonVHF (MMMonVHF) gives a forecast for the day ahead for EME / MS / Tropo / MUF and Solar propagation on a hourly basis. This takes live data from various sources such as LiveMUF / G7RAU / various DxClusters and is therefore upto date. The front page also has latest beacon info and news of DxEpeditions.

2/ For SpE the DxMaps site is excellent. You do not have to be logged in to see what is happening on a live basis but like most sites have to be logged in to post a QSO or comment. You can specify the band and mode and that really comes into play during a SpE opening. Then you can see where the 'cloud' is and point the beam in the best direction. You can also see if it is a waste of time calling if the cloud is in the wrong place for you! You may well hear UK Stations working the DX but a look at the map will tell you if you are in the 'footprint'. During a major SpE opening it is incredible to see how many QSOs are going on. Not only does it give activity from LF– SHF it also has a button on the front screen marked 'MUF Sp-E'. This will give a map of predicted MUFs (Maximum Useable Freq) over a geographical area.

area. Additionally each mode has got a different colour with Tropo being Green, MS Blue and SpE Red (other modes are available).

3/ Future Tropo conditions can be gauged from the Hepburn Tropo Ducting Index although there is an equivalent French website. The site brings up the current forecast but by clicking on the map it advances in 3 hourly then 6 hourly segments. The map shows the intensity and area of the predicted ducts. A really useful site for contest working when you know you will be on a hill at the weekend but will conditions be any good?

4/ For live activity then the ON4KST chat pages cannot be beaten. There are separate rooms depending on your geographical area and band in question. Very useful for arranging skeds on MS but also to see who is on. There are 3 screens. The left one being the chat part, the middle is a spotter and the righthand side has everyone that is logged on. The menu has full instructions including contacting someone directly. When someone contacts you the computer goes 'Meep Meep' (think the old RoadRunner cartoon) and an orange highlight on the screen comes up with the message. The 1st time this happened to me was quite a shock...

5/ If you are using data modes then PSKReporter is good. This can show on a map who you have decoded for any particular mode but also who has decoded you. Especially useful to gauge conditions if you monitor what is happening on FT8. I find this really useful on EME / MS to monitor who has actually decoded me without calling me.

I'm sure that there other sites that are available but these are the ones that I use on a regular basis. Talking of FT8 it does have a real use for monitoring propagation. I found out last summer that if I pointed the 2m array in the general direction of central Europe and leaving WSJT / MSHV on all sorts of stations would pop up out of the ether giving indications of enhanced conditions. One afternoon I noticed a couple of HAs calling CQ on the screen. I scrabbled around in the drawers, found the mic and worked several stations in central EU until the band went dead after a SpE opening of about 10 minutes. This has surely got to be more efficient and enjoyable than listening to white noise on 144.300 for hours on end just waiting and waiting....

List of Sites :

1/ Make More Miles on VHF https://www.mmmonvhf.de/
2/ DXMaps https://www.dxmaps.com/
3/ Hepburn Index https://www.dxinfocentre.com/tropo_eur.html
4/ ON4KST Chat Room http://www.on4kst.info/chat/index.php
5/ PSK Reporter https://pskreporter.info/pskmap.html
6/ Raintoday http://www.raintoday.co.uk/

Hopefully this article will be of interest to the newer VHF operator who has not yet discovered these sites. Personally I only discovered PSKReporter last year (even though I'd been using JT65 for 8 years) thus proving that on the rare occasion you can teach an old dog a new trick. I do believe that there are sites that will also give you text alerts of enhanced conditions but this ol' dog although he has a mobile phone never has it switched on! Maybe an article about these sites from a more enlightened / tech savvy reader will be forthcoming ?

6/ Additional. There is another website that could be very useful for those going /P and that is Raintoday. It gives the live rain coverage over the UK using the Met Office rainfall radars. Although it is always 15 minutes in arrears you can extrapolate the rainfall track to give some indication of potential rainfall in the next few hours without relying on the weather forecast. This site could make the difference between an enjoyable few hours on the hills or getting soaked through (you and the rig) and miserable!

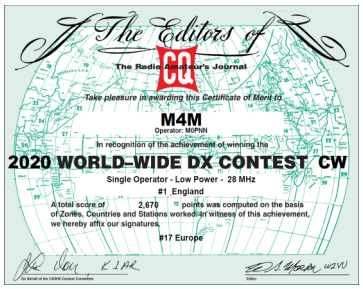
~+~+~+~+~+~+~+~+~+~+~+~+~+~

Bits and pieces:

There have been a few comments on the club's groups.io reflector about a very long but informative article on switched mode power supplies. Thanks to Shabaz and John M0XJA. for this link:-
https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://www.power-supplies.com.au/files/mean-well-user-technical-manual.pdf&ved=2ahUKEwiP0cKt1czwAhUP_RQKHdQJCAQQFjAKegQIDBAC&usg=AOvVaw3-4iZfF5lwd4E220hpuoXp

The first 20 pages are the most relevant to a hobbyist.

From Paul M0PNN (13/5/21)



" Four points towards retaining my contest call with the attached. Not done much RTTY contesting still way behind with DXCC on RTTY only 190 worked.
Thanks for the CW QSO— so rusty here. Work has been all consuming weeks without a day off. Hopefully I can spend more time on the radio and more time on CW.



I did help Dave (G8VZT) with his (second) dish. Found it on ebay £10.50, he picked it up from Chester. Will go around and align the dish 100% when the WX is better. I hope I am still as interested when I am 89 years old.
Cheers—Paul (M4M)



From Martyn G3UKV (15/5/21)



Martyn, G3UKV won the UK Microwave Group Trophy for 24GHz in 2020. He was also on site (Brown Clee Hill) when Paul G8AQA and Heather M0HMO won the RSGB 10GHz 'Open Section' of this year's (May 2nd) 10GHz Trophy using the SCC **G3Z** (TDARS Special Contest Call). More SCC points! However, overall we were 4th, so no Trophy this time:

Operating 24G remote from vehicle as G3UKV/P in 2020 –Brown Clee

Operating solo as G3ZME/P in May 2021 (24GHz) Also Brown Clee



From David M0YDH (14/4/21—copy item sent to W'pton ARS)

" Pictured is my Patch of the Year POTY aerial for 2.4 GHz transmit, the 22 mm tube waveguide and the modified Satellite low noise block LNB. All of this is a great deal longer than the standard LNB. A satellite dish is a parabolic mirror with a focal point which is designed to suit the dish arm, bracket and LNB. Change this for a lengthy POTY and it's sort of out of focus. The new bit is the angled track that I've made this week. It looks a bit like Bridgnorth Cliff Railway! I can position the waveguide tube for peak signal at the focal point. It was a fun and patient bit of bench fitting using materials to hand. I did make a setting gauge in plywood for the position of the standard LNB before chopping 50mm off the dish arm.
The red item is a proper microwave lens from a Black Eagle Red Rooster Rocket LNB. Bloody daft name. It's worth a few dB of gain alone on receive apparently.
I was inspired by an excellent article in AMSAT UK OSCAR News no.22 by Andrew G8TZJ.





I'll report back if it works! I could receive the TV beacon on QO-100 D4 yesterday with the standard LNB. I hope it's stronger signal soon "